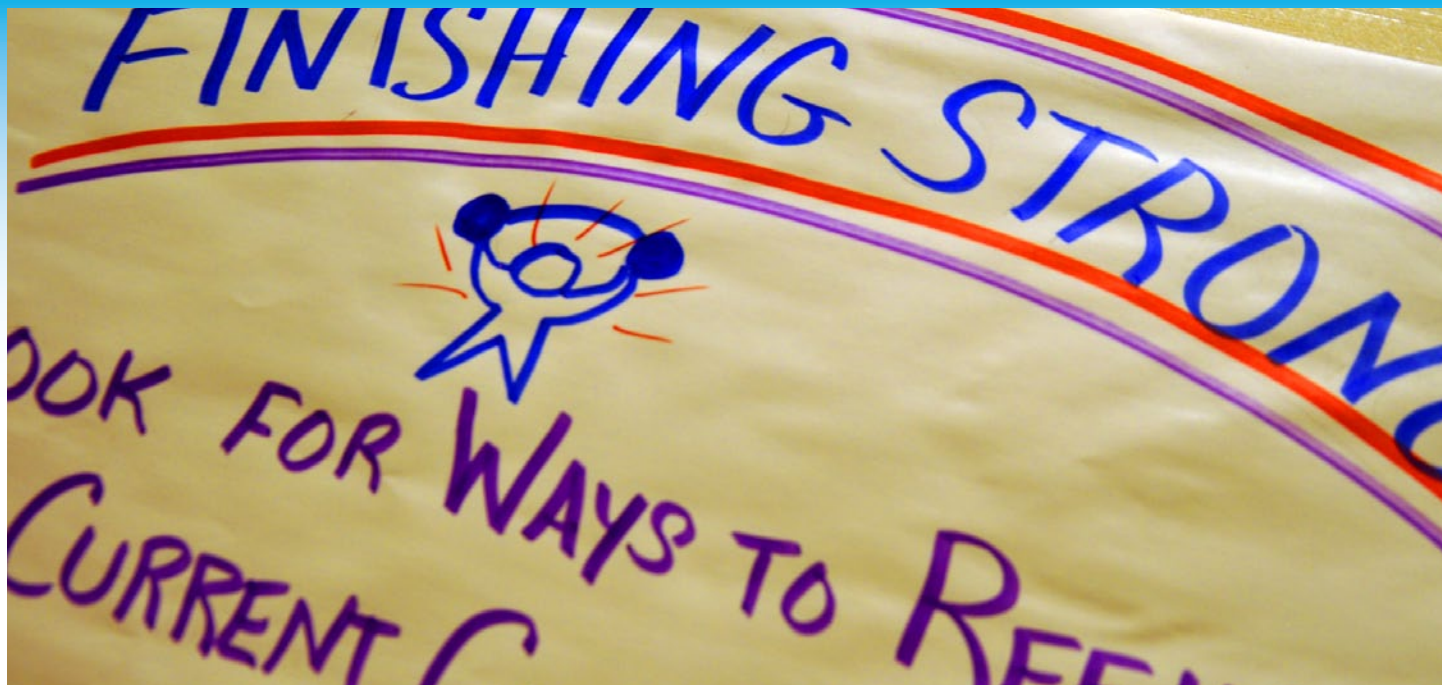




# EM RECOVERY NEWS

AMERICAN RECOVERY AND REINVESTMENT NEWSLETTER

November 2010 | Issue 18



A participant in the Information Exchange prepared an illustration representing the conference's theme of "Celebrate Finishing Strong."

## Recovery Act Team Celebrates Success, Rallies for Strong Finish

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** – DOE Office of Environmental Management (EM) American Recovery and Reinvestment Act Program Director Cynthia Anderson was quick to credit about 10,500 workers for making the EM Recovery Act Program a success.

"The Recovery Act didn't work because of me," she said to a crowd of more than 150 EM Recovery Act team members. "It worked because of you: the contractors, the people in the field."

**“ We have to keep on track. We have to maintain momentum. We need to get the work done. ”**

*EM Recovery Act Program Director Cynthia Anderson*

However, nearly a year of Recovery Act work still remains, and Anderson encouraged the Recovery Act team members from across the nation to continue striving for success.

"Progress has been very, very good," she said. "We have to keep on track. We have to maintain momentum. We need to get the work done."

Anderson spoke to participants in the third installment of EM's Information Exchange in early October. Savannah River Nuclear Solutions (SRNS), the management and operating contractor at Savannah River Site (SRS) in South Carolina, hosted the conference.

### Recovery Act Leaders Educate, Inform, Update

Throughout the two-day event, Recovery Act team leaders gave progress updates on the nearly \$6 billion Recovery Act investments around the DOE complex, including disposing of nuclear waste, remediating contaminated soil and groundwater, and decontaminating and decommissioning facilities. Presenters discussed everything from how the Recovery Act is accelerating work that would cost approximately \$13 billion in future years, saving \$7 billion, to

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## Recovery Act Program Prepares for Strong Finish



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Recovery Act Team Celebrates  
Success, Rallies for Strong Finish



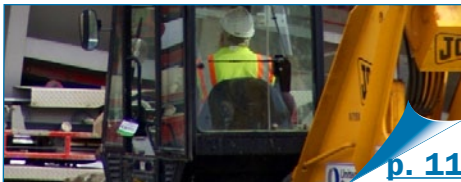
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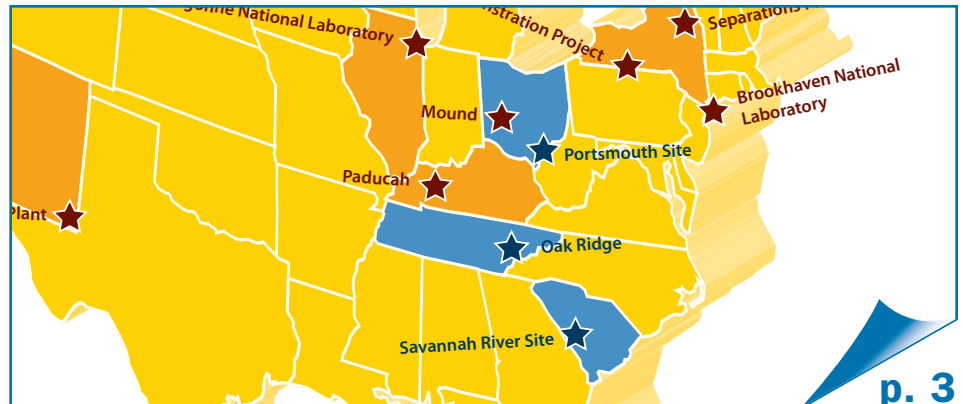
Recovery Act Team Builds Bicycles  
for Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater  
Washington



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West Valley Breaks Ground on  
Groundwater Contamination  
Mitigation Project

In this November issue of Recovery News, we focus on Environmental Management's third Information Exchange that occurred in early October in Washington, D.C. With a theme of "Celebrate Finishing Strong," the two-day conference brought together DOE Office of Environmental Management American Recovery and Reinvestment Act team members from across the nation as they prepare for the final year of work on projects funded by nearly \$6 billion from the Recovery Act. Speakers at the Information Exchange provided timely and informative presentations on topics such as the transition of workers from Recovery Act projects into the general workforce and the work at Recovery Act sites to reduce the footprint of the legacy of the Cold War. The Information Exchange also provided the opportunity for the more than 150 participants, who included federal staff and contractors, to connect with colleagues at other Recovery Act sites and learn about the latest progress around the DOE complex.



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## Workforce Transition Arises as Central Theme in Information Exchange

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# Workforce Transition Arises as Central Theme in Information Exchange

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** – EM leaders at the Information Exchange stressed that a broad team effort involving DOE and community partners is needed to effectively transition contractor workers into new employment as Recovery

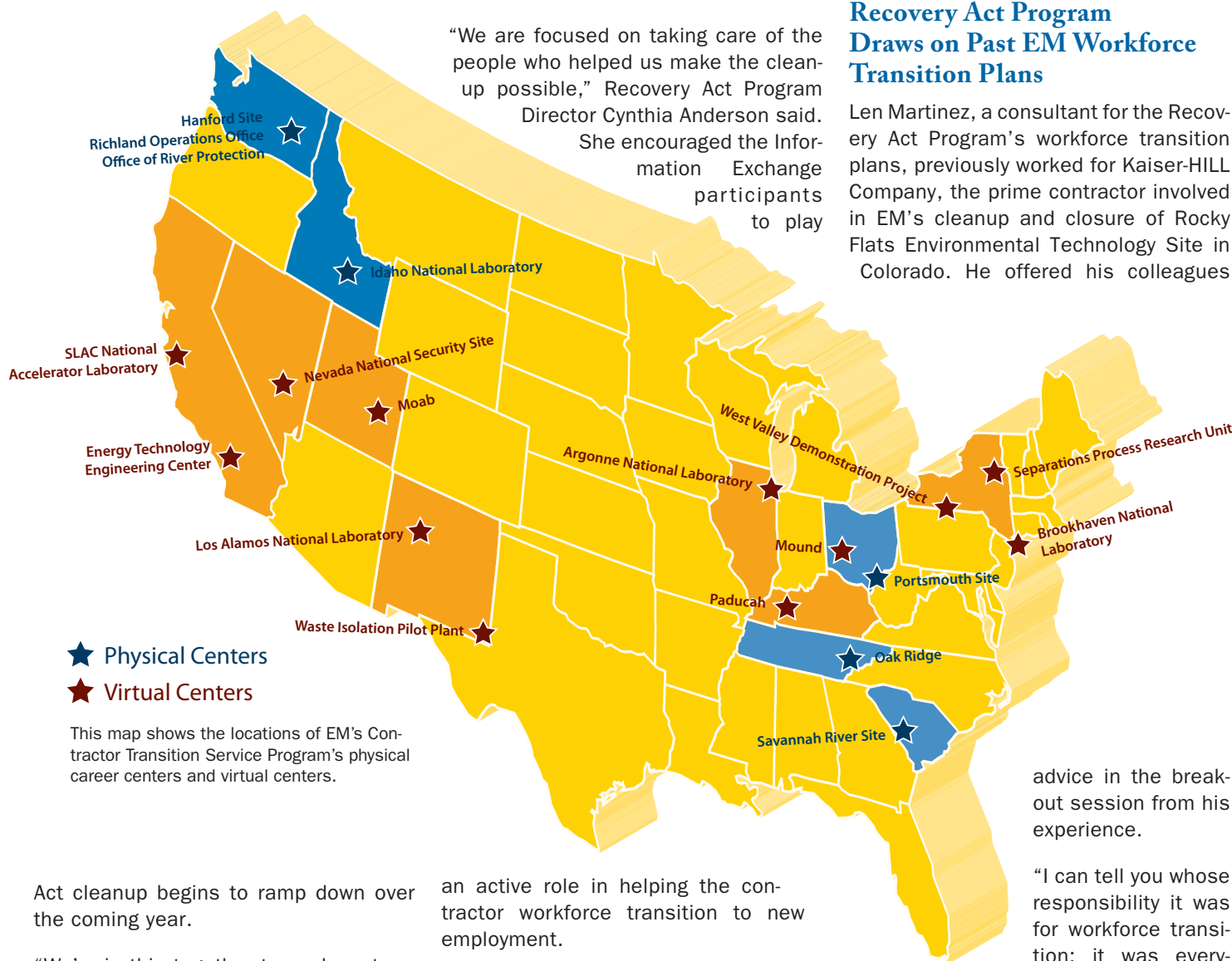
formation Exchange. Speakers emphasized that a strong finish to the nearly \$6 billion in Recovery Act work involves not only executing projects successfully, safely and on schedule, but also providing support to workers as they look for new employment.

Their approaches include establishing outplacement job centers, linking the workers to EM projects post-Recovery Act, and partnering with local organizations and educational institutions to help workers search for jobs.

## Recovery Act Program Draws on Past EM Workforce Transition Plans

Len Martinez, a consultant for the Recovery Act Program's workforce transition plans, previously worked for Kaiser-HILL Company, the prime contractor involved in EM's cleanup and closure of Rocky Flats Environmental Technology Site in Colorado. He offered his colleagues

"We are focused on taking care of the people who helped us make the clean-up possible," Recovery Act Program Director Cynthia Anderson said. She encouraged the Information Exchange participants to play



Act cleanup begins to ramp down over the coming year.

"We're in this together to work on transitioning these employees," DOE Senior Policy Advisor Colin Jones said.

Assisting the workforce into new employment was a critical theme at the In-

formation Exchange. Speakers emphasized that a strong finish to the nearly \$6 billion in Recovery Act work involves not only executing projects successfully, safely and on schedule, but also providing support to workers as they look for new employment.

an active role in helping the contractor workforce transition to new employment. At the Information Exchange, Recovery Act team members formed groups in a breakout session to discuss the ongoing efforts in workforce transition, and finalize strategies for an effective program.

advice in the breakout session from his experience.

"I can tell you whose responsibility it was for workforce transition; it was everybody's in the room,"

Martinez said. "My organization developed and implemented the support functions for workforce transition, but

*Continued on page 4*



## Workforce Transition Arises as Central Theme...

Continued from page 3

all of the leadership, all of the managers, were responsible for helping their employees with their individual workforce transition.”

EM got a head start earlier this year to prepare for workforce transition.

“We wanted to get ahead of the game,” Jones said, adding that EM has been diligent “so we can be effective and do what we need to do for the workers.”

EM is currently rolling out plans to help transition workers. The EM Contractor Transition Service Program will offer workers help with their job searches, training for job interviews, resume writing advice, and access to job openings. The program will consist of physical centers at larger sites and a virtual career center that will provide workers at all sites access to information and services of EM’s cooperative community partners.

“Workers will be able to have access to this virtual system and get the same kind of services and support that folks are getting at the physical locations,” Jones said. “We’re going to do job fairs and workshops.”

EM is partnering with the Energy Facility Contractors Group, a volunteer organization with a large membership of DOE contractors, to make available job

postings of member companies. EM is also partnering with local educational institutions where workers can receive additional job training.

“With the Recovery Act’s \$6 billion investment, we’ve got 10,500 fulltime employees working on these projects in 17 sites,” he said.



DOE Senior Policy Advisor Colin Jones listens to participants in an Information Exchange breakout session discuss strategies to help transition workers into new employment following the Recovery Act Program.

**“We’re in this together to work on transitioning these employees.”**

*DOE Senior Policy Advisor Colin Jones*

Those workers have been essential to the Recovery Act Program’s success, and Anderson wants to make sure they continue to be an indispensable part of the nation’s workforce.

“Let’s make sure we take care of people after the Recovery Act, and get them into other jobs,” Anderson said. □

EM is drawing on funds and services related to worker transition activities available through the DOE Office of Legacy Management.

### EM Makes Great Strides in Recovery Act Job Creation

Jones said EM has done a fantastic job recruiting thousands of workers for the Recovery Act Project.

# Recovery Act Program Targets Important White House Goal of Footprint Reduction

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** – Recovery Act funds are helping EM keep on pace to reduce the footprint of Cold War weapons sites by 40 percent by September 2011, EM Recovery Act Program Deputy Director Thomas Johnson said at the Information Exchange.

That ambitious objective, which will reduce the EM legacy footprint from 931 square miles to 560 square miles, is among the Obama administration's High Priority Performance Goals, which encourage government agencies to deliver results on important priorities.

As of late September 2010, Recovery Act remediation projects reduced the footprint by 202 square miles, or nearly 22 percent of the goal.

"At this point we are slightly ahead of target and fully expect to meet the High Priority Performance Goal by 2011," Johnson said.

Footprint reduction involves cleanup of contaminated soil in a given area, dispositioning contaminated facilities, and installing groundwater remediation systems.

At the Information Exchange, participants gathered in a breakout session to discuss

challenges tied to footprint reduction and vowed to continue progress toward reaching footprint reduction goals. Challenges include obtaining regulatory agreement that cleanup requirements for facilities and soils units were achieved and that groundwater systems were functional and operating as planned.

The footprint reduction goal for 2011 focuses mostly on the large Hanford and Savannah River (SRS) sites. As of late September 2010, footprint reduction totaled 89 square miles at Hanford and 113 square miles at SRS. The goal is to reduce the footprint by 243 square miles at Hanford and 129 square miles at SRS by September 2011.



EM Recovery Act Program Deputy Director Thomas Johnson speaks during the Information Exchange as Savannah River Site Recovery Act Program Deputy Director Rodrigo V. Rimando, Jr., listens in the background.

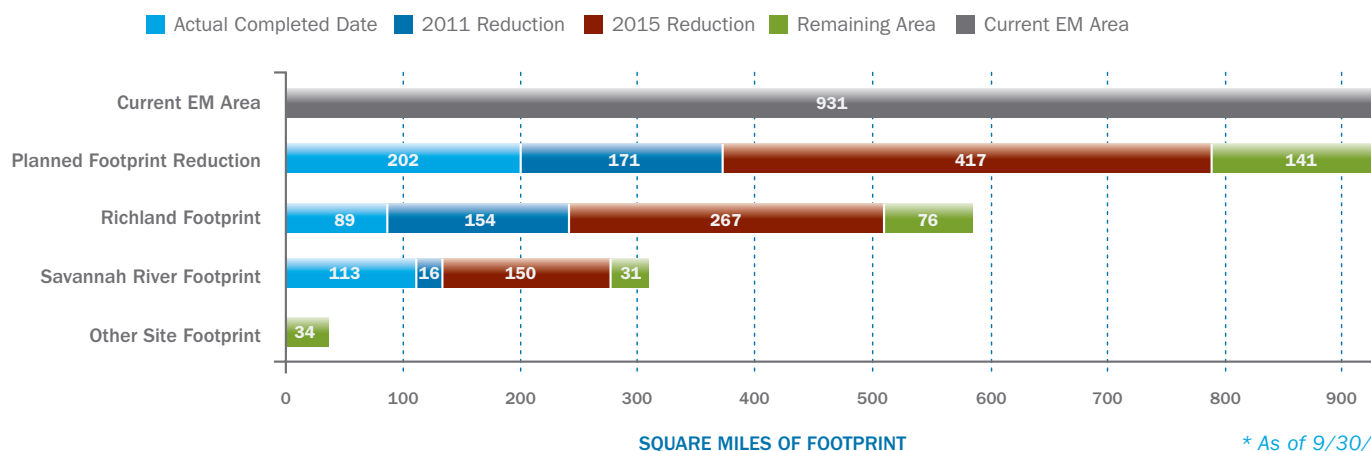
Johnson said EM is committed to achieving the administration's goal, as well as its own internal target for footprint reduction. EM's goal is to reduce the Cold War-era legacy waste site footprint by 90 percent in 2015. That would be a complex-wide reduction from 931 square miles to approximately 90 square miles.

"Footprint reduction is extremely important to us," Johnson said. "We have set more aggressive internal goals to ensure that achieving the High Priority Performance Goals will be a success."

To reach the 2015 goal, EM will work with small sites to collect information

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## Planned Footprint Reduction





## Recovery Act Team Celebrates Success...

Continued from page 1

news that workers are on pace to meet goals for reducing the footprint of the DOE's Cold War-era sites.

In other presentations, speakers detailed the status of finances for all 17 Recovery Act sites. EM Recovery Act Budget Officer Debra Rucker noted that EM recently obligated to projects 99.996 percent of the nearly \$6 billion in Recovery Act funds appropriated to EM. Rucker called that an accomplishment.

The Information Exchange also served as a forum for Recovery Act team members to discuss upcoming challenges, such as the transition of contractor workers to new employment as Recov-

covery Act colleagues across the nation, as information streamed back and forth between EM headquarters and the Recovery Act sites.

The Information Exchange was "beneficial to begin talking about transitioning the workforce," said Paducah and Portsmouth Sites Senior Site Program Manager Joanne D. Lorence. "There is a lot of work still to be done, but the focus was on communication flow between headquarters, the field, and the contractors."

With a theme of "Celebrate Finishing Strong," the Information Exchange provided Recovery Act team members the information and support to maintain momentum and complete their mission successfully.

While speakers frequently praised Recovery Act achievements in the past year and half, they underscored the importance of finishing work in the next year with gusto.

"I believe, and you will agree, that EM money has been well spent by the people in this room. Collectively, we brought help to the community when it

needed it the most, while at the same time working on EM liabilities at a substantial savings to the taxpayers," SRNS President and CEO Garry Flowers said. "But this game has four quarters, and no game is won at half time."

**“We were able to accomplish a lot of work with the investments that we made.”**

*Savannah River Site Recovery Act Program Deputy Director  
Rodrigo V. Rimando, Jr.*

ery Act projects reach completion. Tania Smith, a program manager with the EM Recovery Act Program, said workforce transition will be a team effort.

"Workers have assisted us. They've done a great job, and we have to take care of them," she said.

## Participants Join Forces to Discuss Solutions

Breakout sessions offered participants opportunities to discuss questions, identify issues, and work toward a path for transitioning the workforce and communicating Recovery Act progress.

The Information Exchange provided a platform for communication among Re-

## Recovery Act Program Communicates Success in Person, on Screen

The Information Exchange highlighted the successes of projects nationwide that have disposed of nuclear waste and removed the footprint of past nuclear weapons research and production.

For example, workers at the Portsmouth Site in Ohio demolished the 95,000-square-foot X-633 Cooling Tower complex on schedule earlier this year with \$11 million in Recovery Act funds. In an accomplishment at the Hanford Site in Washington state, the Recovery Act paid for groundwater treatment system improvements, including the installation of wells.

One by one, Recovery Act leaders spoke with enthusiasm about Recovery Act work.

Continued on page 7



Savannah River Site Recovery Act Program Deputy Director Rodrigo V. Rimando, Jr., provides Information Exchange attendees an overview of the two-day conference.



Savannah River Nuclear Solutions President and CEO Garry Flowers informs the Information Exchange audience about Savannah River Site's Recovery Act accomplishments, including the removal of the K Reactor cooling tower.



## Recovery Act Team Celebrates Success...

Continued from page 6

"It's amazing, the amount of progress that's taking place. It really is truly unbelievable from when the Recovery Act came into being in 2009, to what we have been able to accomplish in a short amount of time," DOE Senior Policy Advisor Colin Jones said.

As of early November 2010, the Recovery Act Program has spent nearly \$3.2 billion of the nearly \$6 billion in Recovery Act dollars.

In addition, EM is meeting a core Recovery Act objective of job creation. About 10,500 positions have been created, a total in line with original projections.

Recent data through October 2010 shows the Recovery Act Program is on or ahead of schedule in several project areas. Workers demolished or cleaned more than 151 facilities, a total much higher than the goal of 127 for that period. They disposed of 878,644 cubic meters of demolition debris and soil — equal in size to 351 Olympic swimming pools — which significantly exceeds the target of 801,163 cubic meters. And workers completed the disposition of

transuranic waste totaling 1,883 cubic meters from sites' inventories, surpassing the goal of 1,834 cubic meters. Transuranic waste is contaminated with radioactive elements that have atomic numbers greater than uranium. Speakers at the Information Exchange described such progress as good news.

"We were able to accomplish a lot of work with the investments that we made," SRS Recovery Act Program Deputy Director Rodrigo V. Rimando, Jr. said. □

## Worker Recounts Experience Joining Recovery Act Environmental Cleanup

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** – With an accomplished military and civilian career, a quality education, and plenty of ambition, Kole Helvie headed to Aiken, South Carolina, to find a job in September 2008.

But several months passed, and Helvie was still out of work.

"Apparently, many people were in the same boat," he told the audience at the Information Exchange.

But Helvie's prospect changed once he learned that the Savannah River Site (SRS) was hiring for Recovery Act work. He got a job there in June 2009 as an operations specialist with E2 Consulting Engineers in the SRS transuranic (TRU) waste remediation project. TRU waste consists of materials such as debris and tools contaminated with radioactive elements that have atomic numbers greater than uranium.

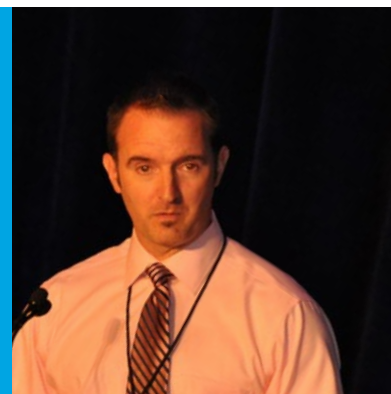
At the Information Exchange, Helvie shared his experience joining thousands of other workers in the SRS Recovery Act Project. A former Walt Disney World employee, he joked that he went from Pluto, the popular Walt Disney character, to plutonium, the transuranic radioactive element once produced in SRS nuclear reactors.

Without prior experience in nuclear waste cleanup, Helvie completed more than 150 training and safety courses to become a valuable, well-trained and skilled employee. At the

Information Exchange, he described the intensive training that included mockup training, emergency drills, mentoring, work observations, and classroom education from instructors with more than 20 years experience.

And, he expressed gratitude for the chance to work in the Recovery Act Program.

Kole Helvie, an operations specialist with E2 Consulting Engineers at Savannah River Site, talks about his experience in Recovery Act work at the Information Exchange.



"You gave me an opportunity to work," Helvie told the Recovery Act team members gathered before him.

"You have added value to us and we're going to add value to you by getting the job done safely. Thank you for the opportunity to learn." □

**Latest News: Over 24,000 workers have benefited from EM Recovery Act funds.**

Office of Environmental Management October 08, 2010

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EMAIL THE EM RECOVERY TEAM

EM Recovery Act Program Director Cynthia Anderson discusses Recovery Act accomplishments in a new EM video.

# Recovery Act Program Debuts Video at Information Exchange

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** – “The Recovery Act IS working.”

That statement, made by EM Recovery Act Program Director Cynthia Anderson and echoed by other leaders involved in the program, is a dominant theme of a new EM video that provides a progress report on the nearly \$6 billion environmental cleanup.

Anderson premiered the video at the Information Exchange, offering the audience of Recovery Act team members a comprehensive summary of their work since the program’s start in early 2009. View the video at <http://www.em.doe.gov/EMRecovery>.

“The Recovery Act is working to create jobs, support small businesses, and clear the way for the Department of Energy to provide cleaner, more reliable, and safer energy alternatives to power America’s future,” Anderson says in the video, moments before EM Assistant

Secretary Inés Triay and Matt Rogers, the former Senior Advisor to the Secretary for Recovery Act Implementation, reinforce her message.

The video, set to music, features shots of workers in action at the 17 Recovery Act sites, from demolition work at Hanford Site to the removal of transuranic waste at the Idaho Site.

In the video, Rogers says EM has lived up to the challenges of helping reinvigorate the nation’s economy. EM has saved and created jobs, maintained transparency and accountability over the use of Recovery Act dollars, and addressed a half-century-old Cold War legacy, he says.

“The Department of Energy is very focused on addressing its environmental responsibilities to ensure a cleaner, safer environment to make room for new, better opportunities for these communities,” he says. “This is the story of

how the Department of Energy’s Office of Environmental Management Recovery Act Program set about accelerating the cleanup of legacy waste at 17 sites in 12 states, while creating thousands of jobs and bringing us much closer to the time when these sites can return to civilian use.”

Triay notes that “we are on target” to reduce EM’s footprint at the Recovery Act sites from 931 square miles to 560 square miles by Sept. 30, 2011. She highlights the program’s spending, which is now close to \$3 billion, and the thorough job training Recovery Act workers receive.

“We initiated a robust training program for the new workers to maintain the Office of Environmental Management’s excellent safety record,” she said. □



## Success in Recovery Act Shows ‘Good Alignment’ with GAO Criteria

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** – According to Recovery Act Project Federal Project Director Frazer Lockhart, EM’s Recovery Act Program has committed leadership, extensive transparency, and a strong link to EM’s mission to close sites and reduce the footprint of the Cold War-era legacy.

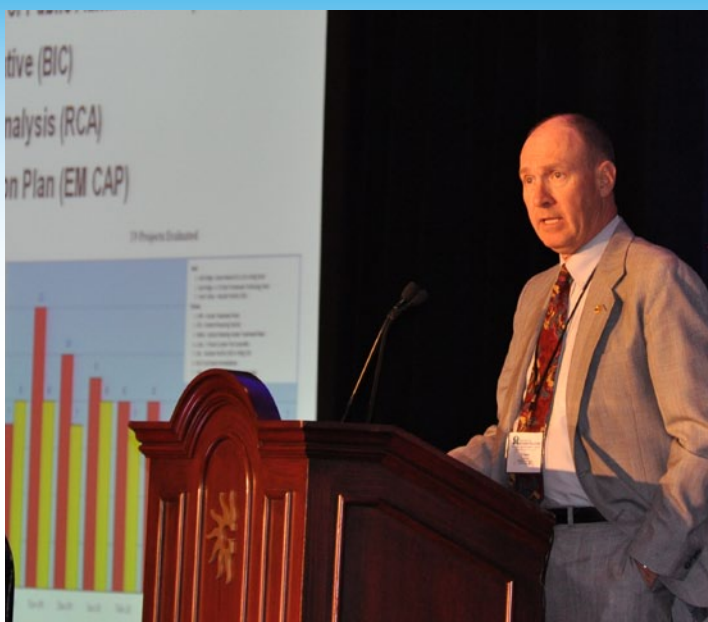
Those are some of the qualities that have made the Recovery Act Program successful, and they also align well with criteria the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) uses to evaluate federal agencies’ project and contract management, according to Lockhart.

“Recovery Act success has shown good alignment with GAO criteria,” Lockhart said.

GAO, an independent, nonpartisan agency that supports Congress, looks for a demonstrated, strong commitment and leadership support to address risks; the capacity of a workforce and other resources to resolve risks; and an action plan that substantially completes near-term corrective measures.

Lockhart pointed to EM Assistant Secretary Inés Triay’s testimony to Congress in 2009 in which she discussed her commitment to the Recovery Act Program. He also highlighted the EM leadership’s strong support for achieving the central Recovery Act goal of job creation by allowing contracts to be modified so the Recovery Act team could hire workers quickly. About 10,500 fulltime equivalent jobs have been created.

The Recovery Act Program strives for transparency through communications such as *Recovery News* and *News*



Recovery Act Project Federal Project Director Frazer Lockhart discusses qualities that have made the Recovery Act Program successful at the Information Exchange.

Flashes that help “get the word out quickly and effectively,” Lockhart said. The transparency also occurs in briefings to regulators, stakeholders, Tribal Nations, unions, and others, “to let them know what we were doing, why we were doing it, and how it made a difference in their situation,” he said.

Addressing the capacity criterion, Lockhart said, “The Recovery Act was all about

resources, bringing in that workforce.” In some cases, workers without experience in EM’s environmental cleanup obtained the “right kind of training and skills to quickly come on the job,” he said.

Lockhart described the many challenges the Recovery Act presented to EM.

“The Recovery Act provided EM the opportunity to prove itself because the Recovery Act came along with some pretty specific things we had to deliver,” Lockhart said. “We were being asked as a program to take \$6 billion in additional funding and apply it not only quickly, but to apply it very well, to maintain project discipline, maintain contract discipline, and maintain a positive safety record.”

EM has succeeded in those tasks, Lockhart said.

“This kind of challenge that came to the EM program, to take on the Recovery Act with all its challenges, with all of its constraints, is something only the best programs can do,” he said. “The best programs take that kind of challenge, as difficult as it is, and they meet it with drive, they meet it with creativity, and they meet it with commitment. That’s exactly what the Recovery Act has done.” □

**“ This kind of challenge that came to the EM program, to take on the Recovery Act with all its challenges, with all of its constraints, is something only the best programs can do. ”**

*Recovery Act Project  
Federal Project Director  
Frazer Lockhart*

# Recovery Act Team Builds Bicycles for Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Washington

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** – An estimated 40 members of the Recovery Act team ended the Information Exchange with an exercise in goodwill by building bicycles donated to eight children in the Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Washington.

The team members formed small groups that competed to be the first group to assemble a bicycle. With instruction manuals on hand, all teams successfully completed the task. The Recovery Act team members presented the bicycles to the children from the FBR Branch at the Town Hall Education Arts & Recreation Campus in Washington, D.C. as a surprise. The children were happy to receive the bicycles, along with helmets.

“They were pretty excited to get the bicycles,” FBR Branch Program Director Elliott Brown, Jr., said of the children between the ages of eight and 12. “They couldn’t wait to get on them.” The Recovery Act team members helped the children put on their helmets before they began riding their bicycles.

Brown said the children at his branch received donated bicycles only once before in the 3 ½ years he has worked there.

The event was sponsored by Savannah River Nuclear Solutions (SRNS), which hosted the Information Exchange. SRNS donated the bicycles.

The groups also developed team-building and problem-solving skills. As part of the challenge, they solved puzzles and obtained clues from competing teams before they were given bicycle parts to assemble. □



Information Exchange participants assembled bicycles donated to children in the Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Washington, who are pictured in the foreground.



## West Valley Breaks Ground on Groundwater Contamination Mitigation Project

**WEST VALLEY, N.Y.** – West Valley Demonstration Project (WVDP) broke ground in late October for an 850-foot-long trench designed to slow the spread of a contaminated groundwater plume. The project is funded by \$6.5 million in Recovery Act dollars.

Seven trucks shipped the parts to assemble the central player in the project: a 200,000-pound trencher to excavate 85,000 cubic feet of soil at depths up to 30 feet below the surface for the trench, known as a permeable treatment wall.

The trench will contain nearly 2,000 metric tons of zeolite, a naturally occurring mineral formed from volcanic ash. The zeolite will strip the contaminant, Strontium-90, from the groundwater passing through the trench. The contamination originated from a leak in commercial nuclear fuel reprocessing in the 1960s.

In the past two years, WVDP conducted extensive engineering and planning to ensure the trench will effectively remove the Strontium-90. That work included tests to determine the physical, chemical, and radiological characteristics of the plume and soil. Workers built an access road to the trench and a surface-water drainage system to divert storm water away from the trench.

The trencher has a chainsaw-like arm that rotates vertically in the ground, excavating soil and positioning the zeolite in one evolution. The excavated soil is placed in a lined, above-ground container beside the trench and treated.

Installation of the trench will be completed this fall. □



One-ton bags of zeolite are lifted over a truck called a "stone slinger" and cut open for placement in the trench.



## Recovery Act Investment Leads to \$7 Billion in Savings

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** – The Recovery Act's estimated \$6 billion is an investment that will allow EM to complete work that would cost \$13 billion in future years, resulting in a net cost savings of \$7 billion, according to EM Recovery Act Program Senior Program Analyst Steve Trischman.

The \$7 billion in savings achieved through accelerated cleanup includes two components: a \$4 billion reduction in EM's lifecycle costs, and \$3 billion in cost avoidance of \$3 billion. Cost avoidance means completing work now that would cost more in the future due to inflation and other factors.

"That's \$13 billion we don't have to get in future appropriations," Trischman said.

In addition, EM could potentially accrue more savings before the end of Recovery Act work in September 2011 since many projects are performing well. If that trend continues, and the current amounts of contingency and management reserve are not needed, up to \$600 million in additional projects could be accomplished under the Recovery Act, which will produce additional lifecycle cost savings. □

## Information Exchange Attendees Collaborate to Improve Project Completion Process

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** – Federal staff and contractors at the Information Exchange weighed in on a recommended approach to effectively document and verify the completion of more than 90 Recovery Act projects and activities as they wrap up in the next year.

Richland Operations Office Recovery Act Program Director Jon Peschong presented a draft process to verify and document the completion of capital and operational activities. He also proposed guidance to help Recovery Act sites provide the needed documentation as projects come to a close by September 2011.

Recovery Act team members will finalize the project verification process in the weeks ahead. □

## Recovery Act Program Targets Important White House Goal...

Continued from page 5

on footprint reduction so more sites in addition to Hanford and SRS can contribute to the goal.

EM tracks milestones achieved in work that supports footprint reduction goals. As of late September 2010, Recovery Act workers disposed of 218 of 729 debris piles, remediated 15 of 20 soil units, and decontaminated and demolished 17 of 29 industrial and radioactive structures.

EM will continue its close scrutiny of the footprint reduction program at each site and at headquarters to ensure all goals are met. As EM completes more site remediation and footprint reduction, EM will work with local communities and local governments to identify potential reuse opportunities for the remediated areas. □

Information Exchange attendees discuss workforce transition plans for Recovery Act sites in a breakout session.



Engineers conduct a demonstration of the Mobile Arm Retrieval System's vacuum retrieval system for staff members at the Office of River Protection at Hanford. The Recovery Act-funded technology is expected to improve tank waste retrieval at Hanford.

## Recovery Act-Funded Technology Aims to Improve Waste Removal from Hanford Tanks

**RICHLAND, Wash.** – Recovery Act funds totaling more than \$11 million are helping the Office of River Protection build a new vacuum retrieval system to speed the removal of waste from some of Hanford's single-shell storage tanks.

More than 53 million gallons of radioactive and chemical waste left over from decades of defense-related nuclear materials production are stored in Hanford's 177 underground tanks.

The vacuum system is the latest development in the Mobile Arm Retrieval System (MARS), a remotely operated, telescoping arm mounted on a mast in the center of a tank. MARS is capable of reaching all parts of a tank and is articulated, allowing it to maneuver around obstacles.

The new vacuum system is mounted on the MARS and creates the necessary suction by injecting an upstream flow of high-pressure liquid through the intake pipe, creating a vacuum strong enough to effectively retrieve tank waste. This design means the system can vacuum waste out of tanks without using large volumes of liquids. In tanks that are known or suspected to have leaked, retrieval equipment that uses less liquid is desirable.

Testing of the new system will continue into early next year. □

**FOR MORE INFORMATION ON  
EM RECOVERY ACT WORK PLEASE VISIT:**

<http://www.em.doe.gov/emrecovery/>

<http://www.recovery.gov>

<http://recoveryclearinghouse.energy.gov>

**EMAIL ANY QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS TO:**

[EMRecoveryActProgram@em.doe.gov](mailto:EMRecoveryActProgram@em.doe.gov)

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